SECT. VI.—PRACTICAL RULE TO BE FOLLOWED IN DETERMINING WHAT IS GOOD AND EVIL.

We do not mean to enter upon the practical interests involved in the discussion of this subject. All that is required of us in such a treatise as this, is to shew how the principles unfolded stand in relation to the practical rule.

Every man, we have endeavoured to shew, is led by his conscience to see that he is under law, which is the law of the God who made him, and who made the universe. It is because man is under law, that he can, by disobeying it, become a sinner, and be made to feel that he is a sinner; for "where there is no law there is no transgression." This it is which entitles God to call men into judgment, and which renders every sinner without excuse.

To man, as shut out from supernatural revelation, the law in the heart is the arbiter; they who have no written law are a law unto themselves. But this arbiter always points to a law above itself. And there are times when, even with this monitor, the mind feels itself sadly bewildered, not being able with clearness to see the path of duty in perplexing circumstances, or to distinguish between the voice of conscience and that of interest or passion. We believe that the deepest feeling of conscience in the breasts of the heathen, if they would attend to it, and if it could find utterance, would give forth a cry for a brighter light, for a star to guide them to one whom they have been in a sense expecting. Some of the most deeply thinking of the Pagan philosophers have expressed their longings for a supernatural revelation.

The existence of the law in the heart does not render a written law unnecessary—perhaps not even to beings perfectly pure. Those who possess the inward principle will find stability and consistency imparted to morality by embodying its dictates in a code of precepts. Hence every people possessing the art of writing has had some sort of written law. But

the work of
. forming a moral code without revelation has ever been felt to be encompassed with great difficulties,* and the result of such an

* According to the principles enumerated in Note E, it can only be done by an inductive generalization of the individual decisions of the moral faculty. But besides that the conscience is so misled by a perverted mind, how difficult is it to seize and express, in all their integrity, the principle involved in the moral judgments?